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DEAD REDS: As i sit down to write, news has come of a nuclear power "accident" in Russia, with the dead numbered at either two (what the soviets are saying) or in the thousands (reports gathered from ham radio operators in the area). Radioactive waste is spewing into our atmosphere, 49,000 human beings in the immediate vicinity were not evacuated until they'd been exposed to hazardous levels of radioactivity for 36 hours due to soviet government foul-ups, all the animals within an 18 mile radius of the plant were destroyed because they were "contaminated," warnings have been issued in some Eastern European countries that rainwater and milk are unfit to drink and that people should avoid conceiving children until radiation levels drop, a group of American bone marrow transplant experts have been flown to Russia to try to save the "operable cases" of radiation contamination, the town of Pripyat (25,000 inhabitants) is abandoned, the Pripyat River is in danger of contaminating the Dnieper River and thence the water supply of Kiev, and on page four of my daily newspaper, a long article by American nuclear power "experts" tells me that not only are we all perfectly safe, but "it couldn't happen here."

I despise liars.

Meanwhile, not a single comic book company is taking out ads to eulogize dead Russians the way they did for the dead Challenger space shuttle crew. Maybe 'cause they're reds and this is a cold war, or maybe 'cause we like our dead heroes to be killed quickly, cleanly and in a blaze of glory – but for whatever reason, nobody is out there shedding tears for the firefighters who tried to contain the nuclear plant inferno ("30 meter high flames," according to the soviet news agency, Tass) while they sank into liquifying asphalt.

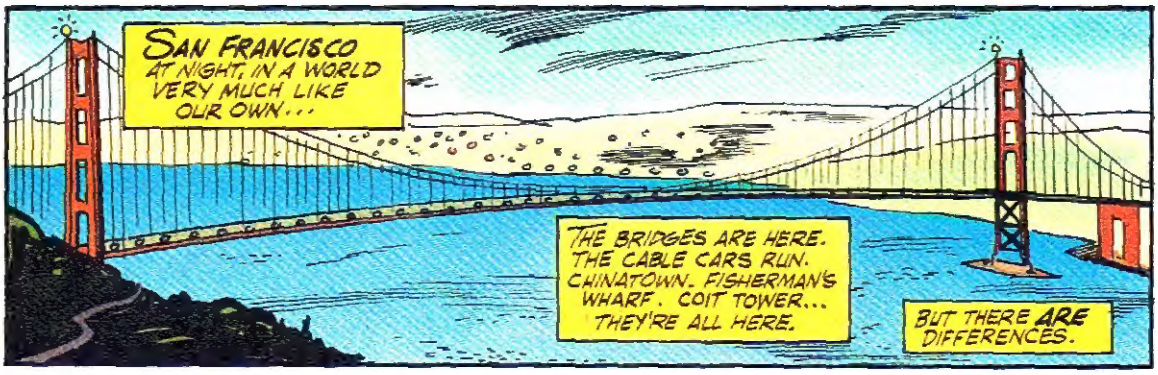
Does it matter that they were commies? Does it matter that they were victims of the most massive totalitarian slave-state the world has ever known? Does it matter that they probably believed that *Science – that unholy god – was* on their side?

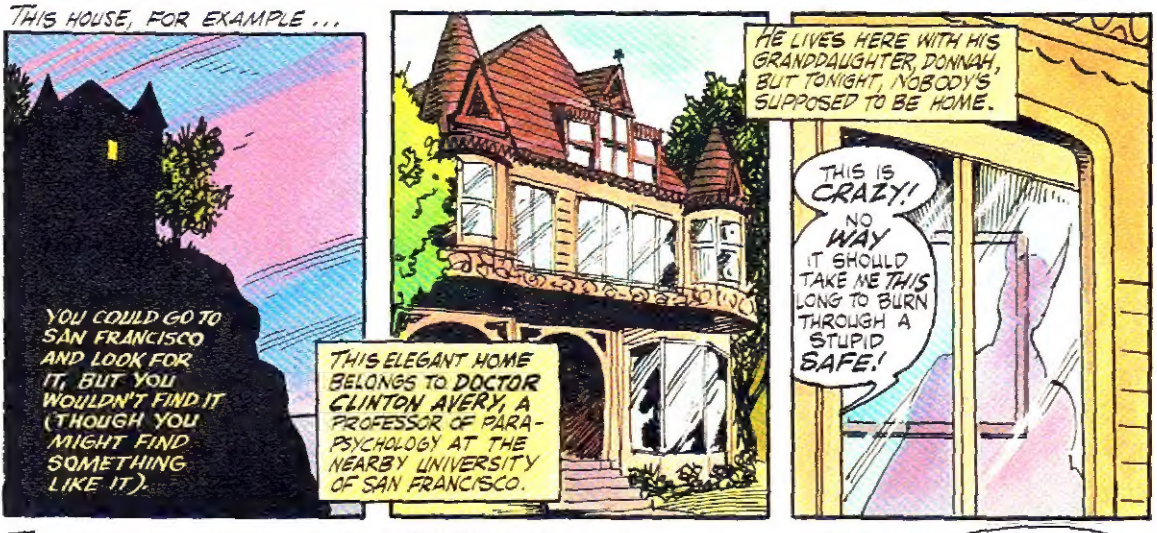
I've got news for you, folks: Science isn't on ***anybody's*** side. Science is just the most workable way to learn about that thing us aging hipsters laughingly call "*reality.*" *The Laws of Science* bind us to themselves, and we can never escape. Among the Laws are these: Hydrogen is quite explosive . . . and nuclear radiation is deadly. Hydrogen can be harnessed, through containment, but accidents will happen and people can die if they're involved in a hydrogen explosion. Nuclear radiation can be harnessed through containment too, but accidents will happen, and people can die if they're involved in a nuclear explosion, plant meltdown, radiation link, or contamination by fallout.

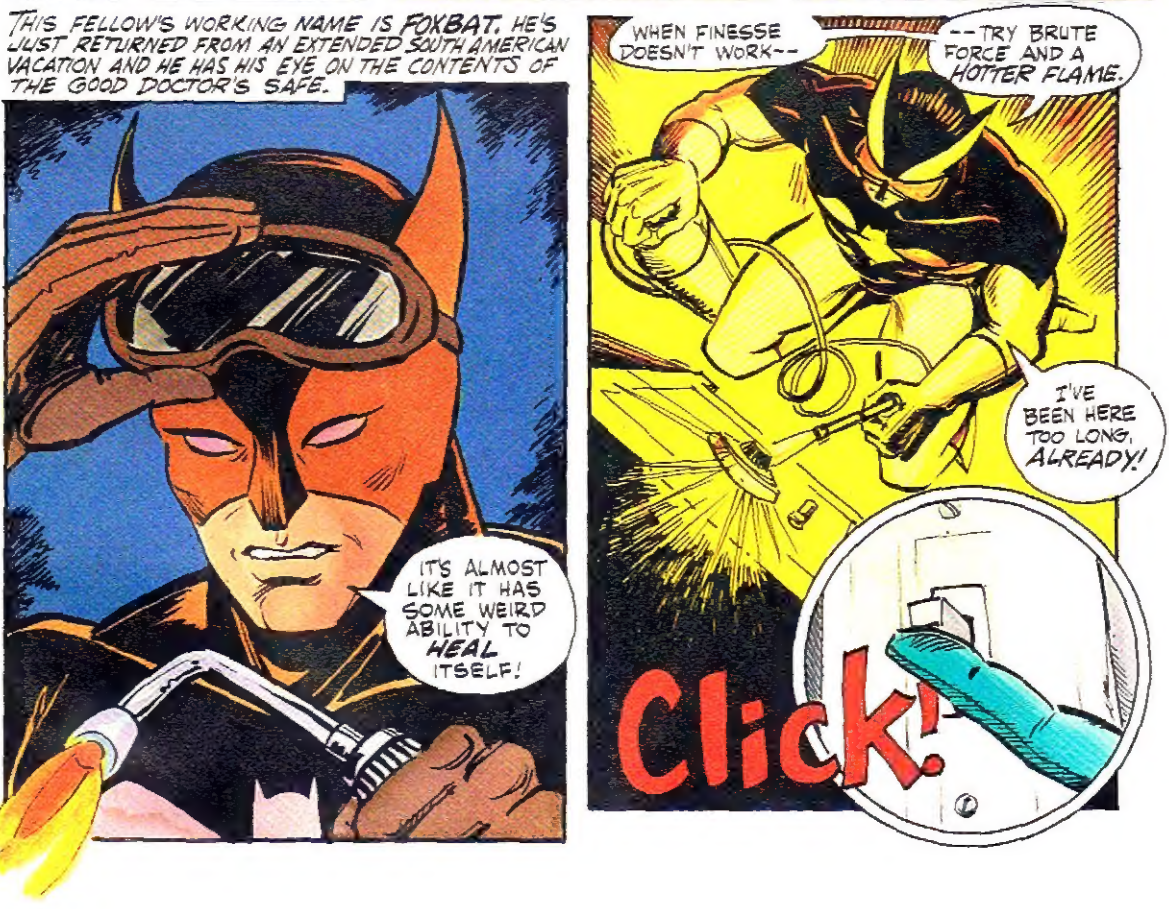
Consider the odds . . . i don't know about you, but i'd feel safer aboard a space shuttle right now than downwind from Chernobyl. Nuclear power will NEVER be safe. It's too bad so many reds had to die to prove that simple scientific law.

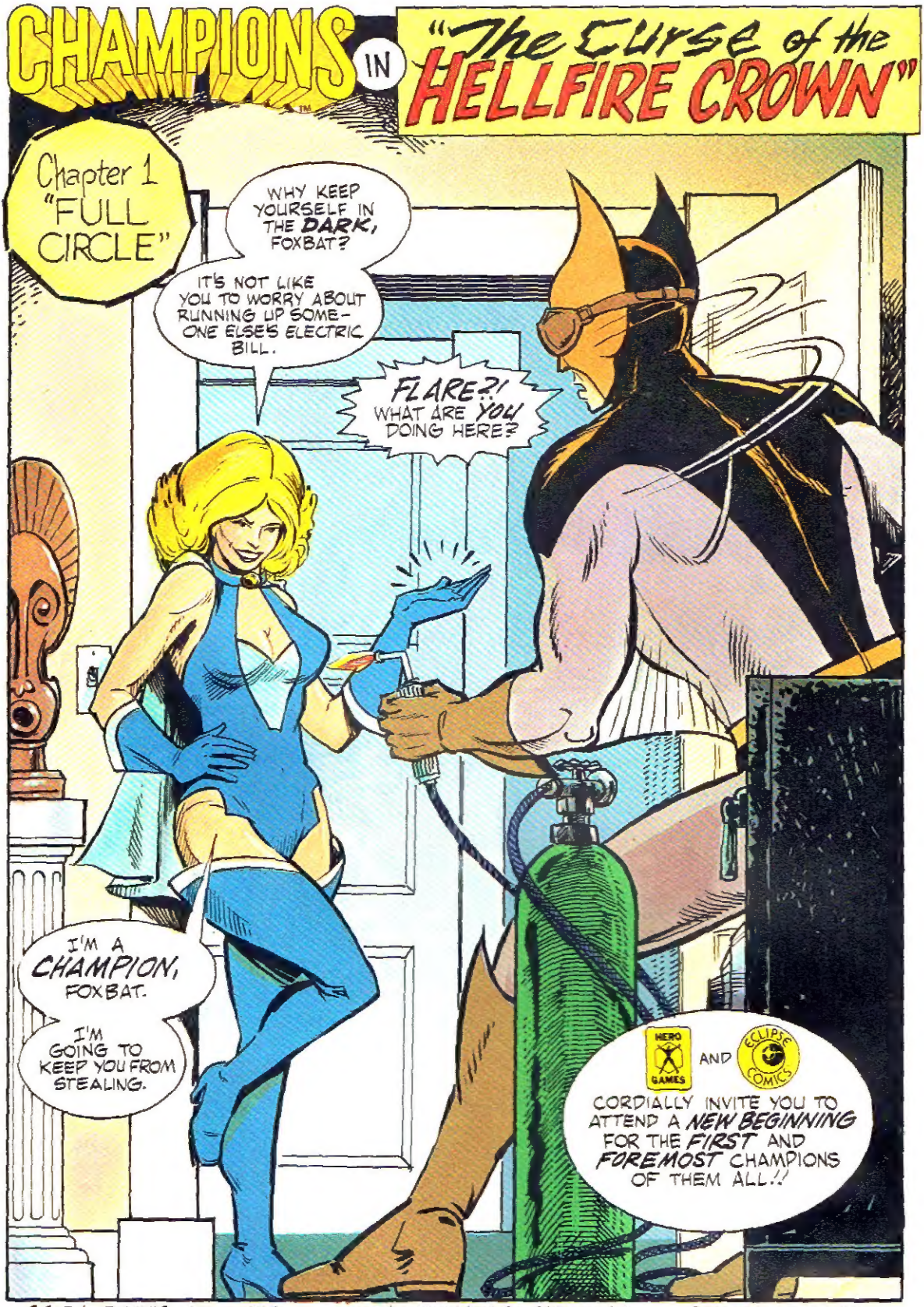
catherine yronwode

CHAMPIONS™ no. 1, June 1986. Published by Eclipse Comics, P.O. Box 199, Guerneville CA 95446. Catherine Yronwode, Editor-in-Chief. Sean Deming, Associate Editor. Dean Mullaney, Publisher. Story and character background ©1986 by Dennis Mallonee, artwork ©1986 by Carol Lay. All other material, unless otherwise noted, ©1986 by Eclipse Enterprises, Inc. All rights reserved. CHAMPIONS™ and the HERO SYSTEM™ are trademarks of Hero Games, and are used with permission. Some of the characters appearing herein are based on characters created for the original CHAMPIONS™ campaign, and are used with the permission of their creators, who retain all rights of ownership. The stories, characters, and events in this magazine are fictional. Film by SM Graphics. Printed in Canada

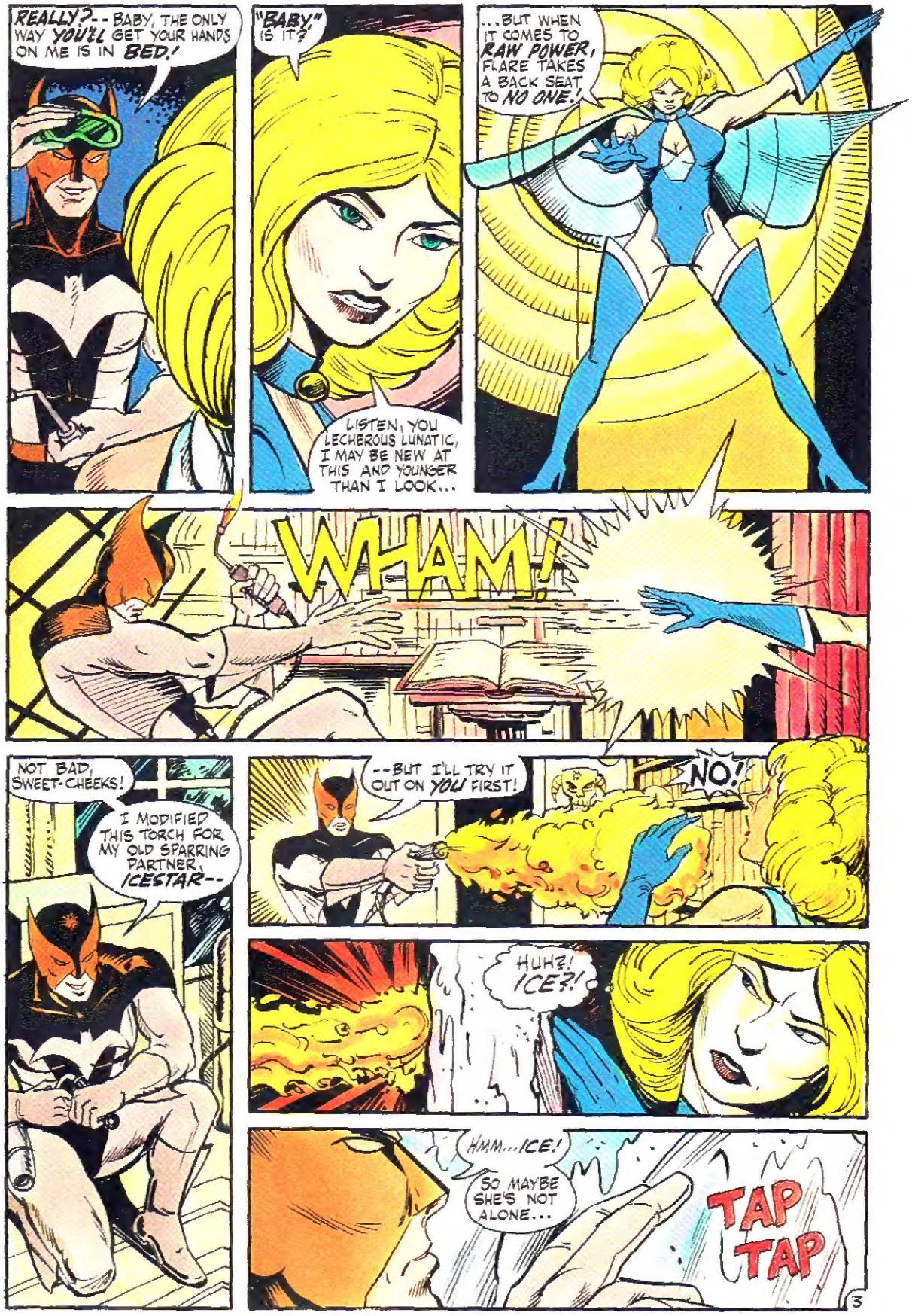

SAN FRANCISCO AT NIGHT, IN A WORLD VERY MUCH LIKE OUR OWN...
THE BRIDGES ARE HERE. THE CABLE CARS RUN. CHINATOWN. FISHERMAN'S WHARF. COIT TOWER... THEY'RE ALL HERE.
BUT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES.

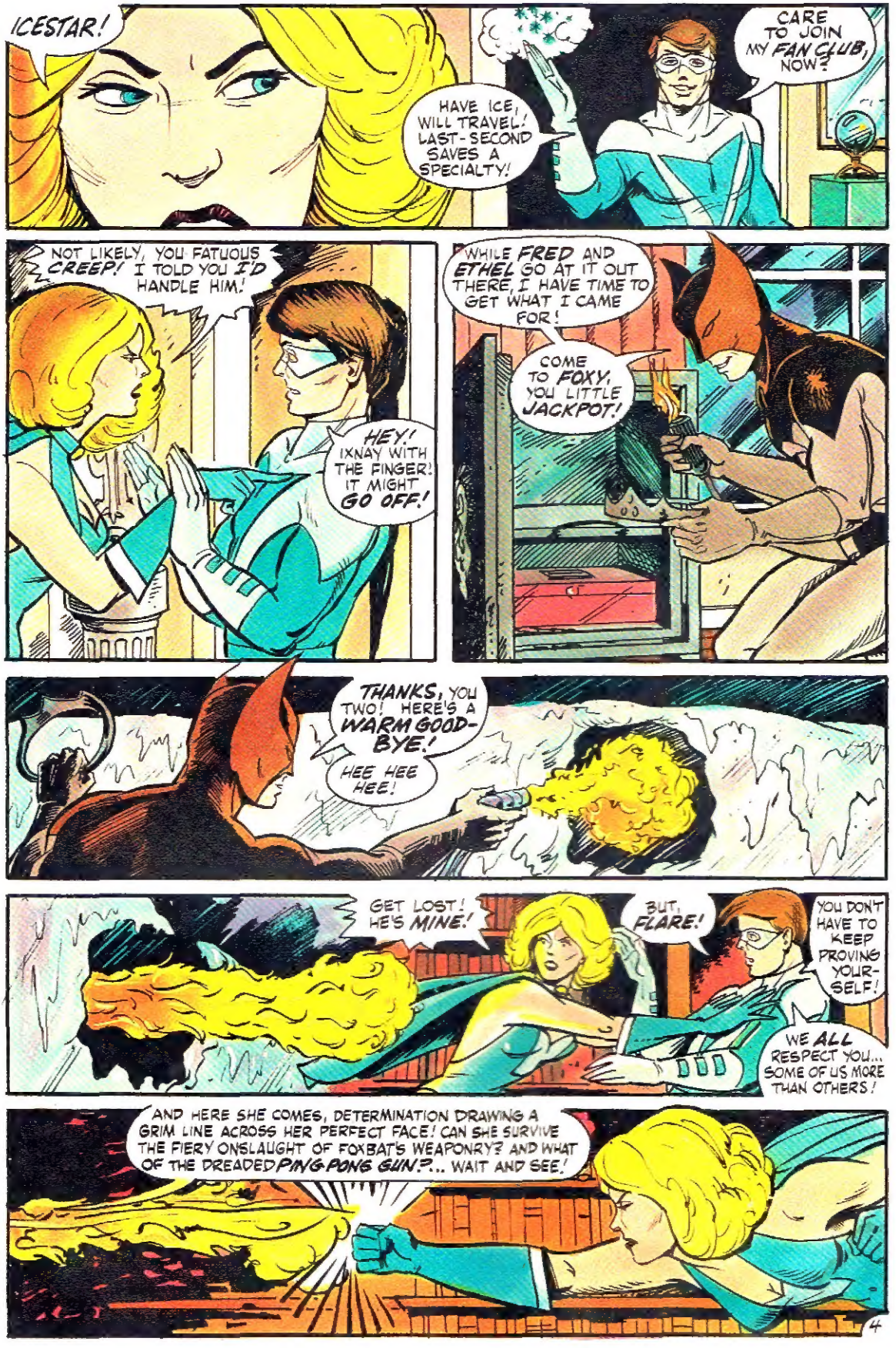

THIS HOUSE, FOR EXAMPLE...
YOU COULD GO TO SAN FRANCISCO AND LOOK FOR IT, BUT YOU WOULDN'T FIND IT (THOUGH YOU MIGHT FIND SOMETHING LIKE IT).
THIS ELEGANT HOME BELONGS TO DOCTOR CLINTON AVERY, A PROFESSOR OF PARA-PSYCHOLOGY AT THE NEARBY UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO.
HE LIVES HERE WITH HIS GRANDDAUGHTER DONNAH, BUT TONIGHT, NOBODY'S SUPPOSED TO BE HOME.
THIS IS CRAZY! NO WAY IT SHOULD TAKE ME THIS LONG TO BURN THROUGH A STUPID SAFE!

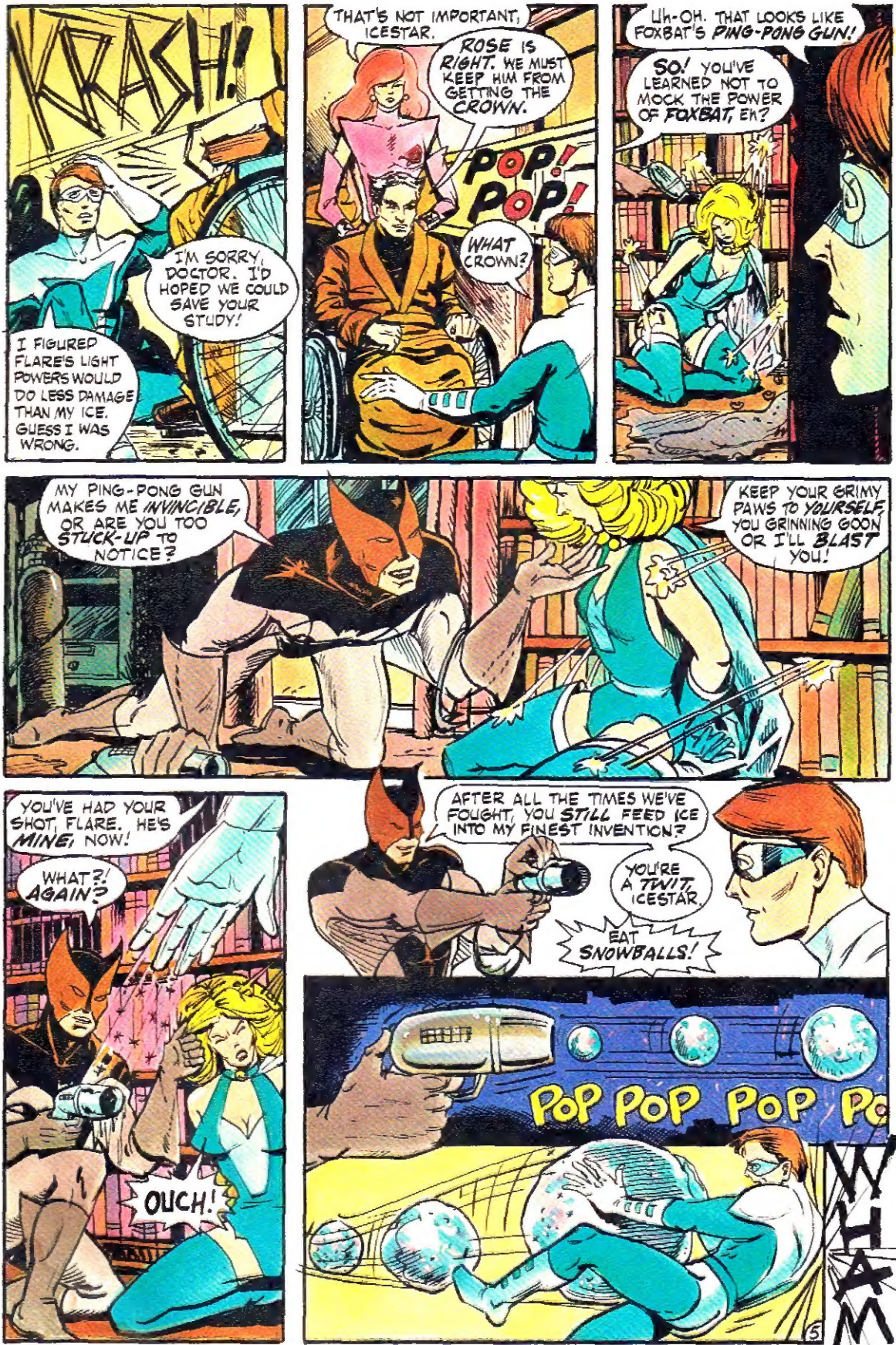

THIS FELLOW'S WORKING NAME IS FOXBAT. HE'S JUST RETURNED FROM AN EXTENDED SOUTH AMERICAN VACATION AND HE HAS HIS EYE ON THE CONTENTS OF THE GOOD DOCTOR'S SAFE.
IT'S ALMOST LIKE IT HAS SOME WEIRD ABILITY TO HEAL ITSELF!
WHEN FINESSE DOESN'T WORK--
--TRY BRUTE FORCE AND A HOTTER FLAME.
I'VE BEEN HERE TOO LONG, ALREADY!
Click!

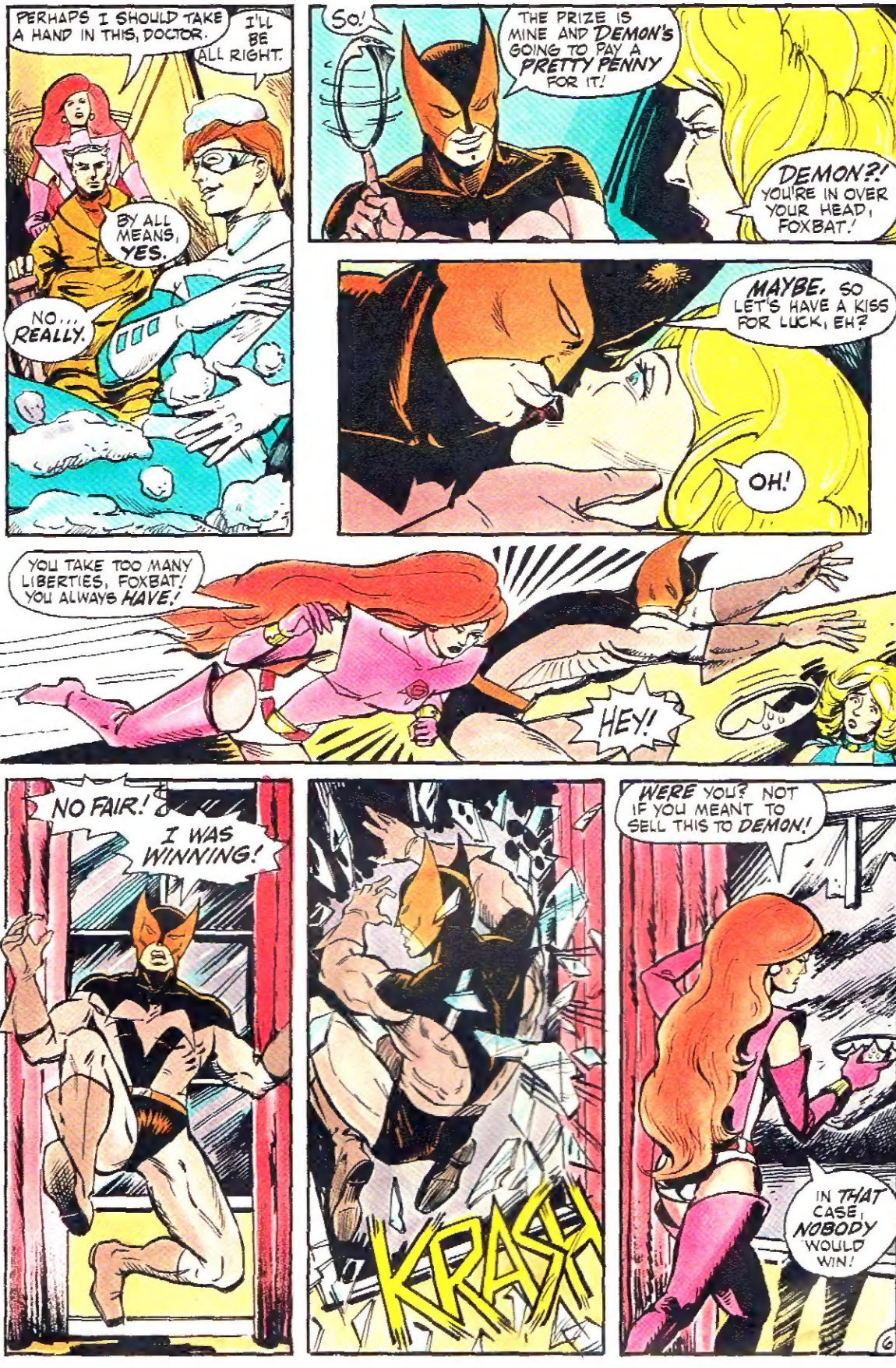

CHAMPIONS™ IN "The Curse of the HELLFIRE CROWN"
Chapter 1 "FULL CIRCLE"
WHY KEEP YOURSELF IN THE DARK, FOXBAT?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO WORRY ABOUT RUNNING UP SOMEONE ELSE'S ELECTRIC BILL.
FLARE?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'M A CHAMPION, FOXBAT.
I'M GOING TO KEEP YOU FROM STEALING.
HERO GAMES AND ECLIPSE COMICS CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO ATTEND A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE FIRST AND FOREMOST CHAMPIONS OF THEM ALL!!

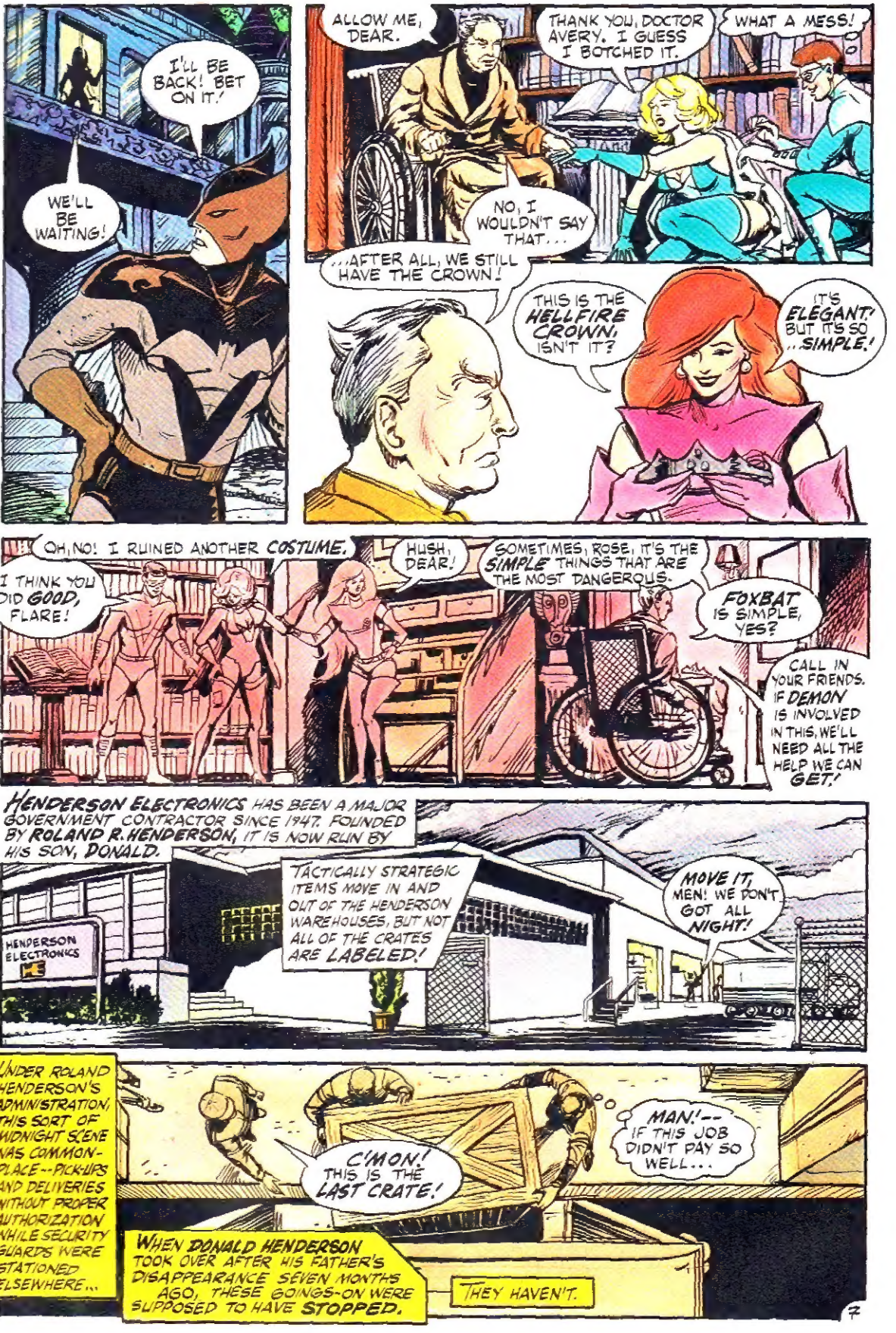
STORY: DENNIS MALLONEE ART & INCIDENTALS: CAROL LAY COLORS: TOM LUTH
EDITOR: cat yronwode
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL THE HEROES AT HERO GAMES FOR CHARACTER DESIGNS & INSPIRATION!


REALLY?-- BABY, THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL GET YOUR HANDS ON ME IS IN BED!
"BABY" IS IT?
LISTEN, YOU LECHEROUS LUNATIC, I MAY BE NEW AT THIS AND YOUNGER THAN I LOOK...
...BUT WHEN IT COMES TO RAW POWER, FLARE TAKES A BACK SEAT TO NO ONE!
WHAM!
NOT BAD, SWEET-CHEEKS!
I MODIFIED THIS TORCH FOR MY OLD SPARRING PARTNER, ICESTAR--
--BUT I'LL TRY IT OUT ON YOU FIRST!
NO!
HUH?! ICE?!
HMM...ICE!
SO MAYBE SHE'S NOT ALONE...
TAP TAP
3


ICESTAR!
HAVE ICE, WILL TRAVEL! LAST-SECOND SAVES A SPECIALTY!
CARE TO JOIN MY FAN CLUB, NOW?
NOT LIKELY, YOU FATUOUS CREEP! I TOLD YOU I'D HANDLE HIM!
HEY! IXNAY WITH THE FINGER! IT MIGHT GO OFF!
WHILE FRED AND ETHEL GO AT IT OUT THERE, I HAVE TIME TO GET WHAT I CAME FOR!
COME TO FOXY, YOU LITTLE JACKPOT!
THANKS, YOU TWO! HERE'S A WARM GOOD-BYE!
HEE HEE HEE!
GET LOST! HE'S MINE!
BUT, FLARE!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP PROVING YOURSELF!
WE ALL RESPECT YOU... SOME OF US MORE THAN OTHERS!
AND HERE SHE COMES, DETERMINATION DRAWING A GRIM LINE ACROSS HER PERFECT FACE! CAN SHE SURVIVE THE FIERY ONSLAUGHT OF FOXBAT'S WEAPONRY? AND WHAT OF THE DREADED PING-PONG GUN?... WAIT AND SEE!

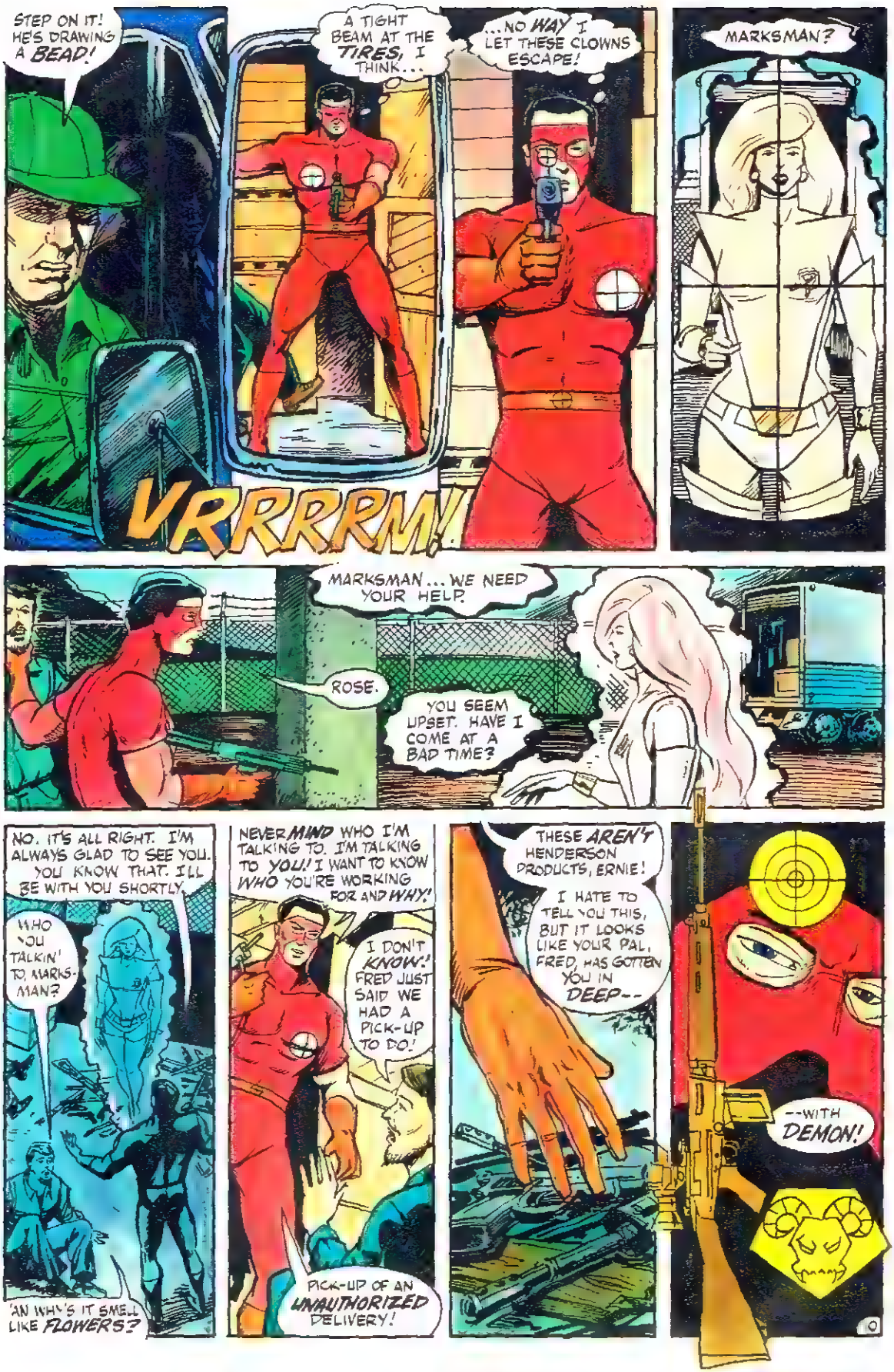

KRASH!
I'M SORRY, DOCTOR. I'D HOPED WE COULD SAVE YOUR STUDY!
I FIGURED FLARE'S LIGHT POWERS WOULD DO LESS DAMAGE THAN MY ICE. GUESS I WAS WRONG.
THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT, ICESTAR.
ROSE IS RIGHT. WE MUST KEEP HIM FROM GETTING THE CROWN.
POP! POP!
WHAT CROWN?
UH-OH. THAT LOOKS LIKE FOXBAT'S PING-PONG GUN!
SO! YOU'VE LEARNED NOT TO MOCK THE POWER OF FOXBAT, EH?
MY PING-PONG GUN MAKES ME INVINCIBLE, OR ARE YOU TOO STUCK-UP TO NOTICE?
KEEP YOUR GRIMY PAWS TO YOURSELF, YOU GRINNING GOON OR I'LL BLAST YOU!
YOU'VE HAD YOUR SHOT, FLARE. HE'S MINE, NOW!
WHAT?! AGAIN?
OUCH!
AFTER ALL THE TIMES WE'VE FOUGHT, YOU STILL FEED ICE INTO MY FINEST INVENTION?
YOU'RE A TWIT, ICESTAR.
EAT SNOWBALLS!
POP POP POP
WHAM
5


PERHAPS I SHOULD TAKE A HAND IN THIS, DOCTOR.
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
BY ALL MEANS, YES.
NO... REALLY.
So!
THE PRIZE IS MINE AND DEMON'S GOING TO PAY A PRETTY PENNY FOR IT!
DEMON?! YOU'RE IN OVER YOUR HEAD, FOXBAT!
MAYBE. SO LET'S HAVE A KISS FOR LUCK, EH?
OH!
YOU TAKE TOO MANY LIBERTIES, FOXBAT! YOU ALWAYS HAVE!
HEY!
NO FAIR! I WAS WINNING!
KRASH
WERE YOU? NOT IF YOU MEANT TO SELL THIS TO DEMON!
IN THAT CASE, NOBODY WOULD WIN!
6

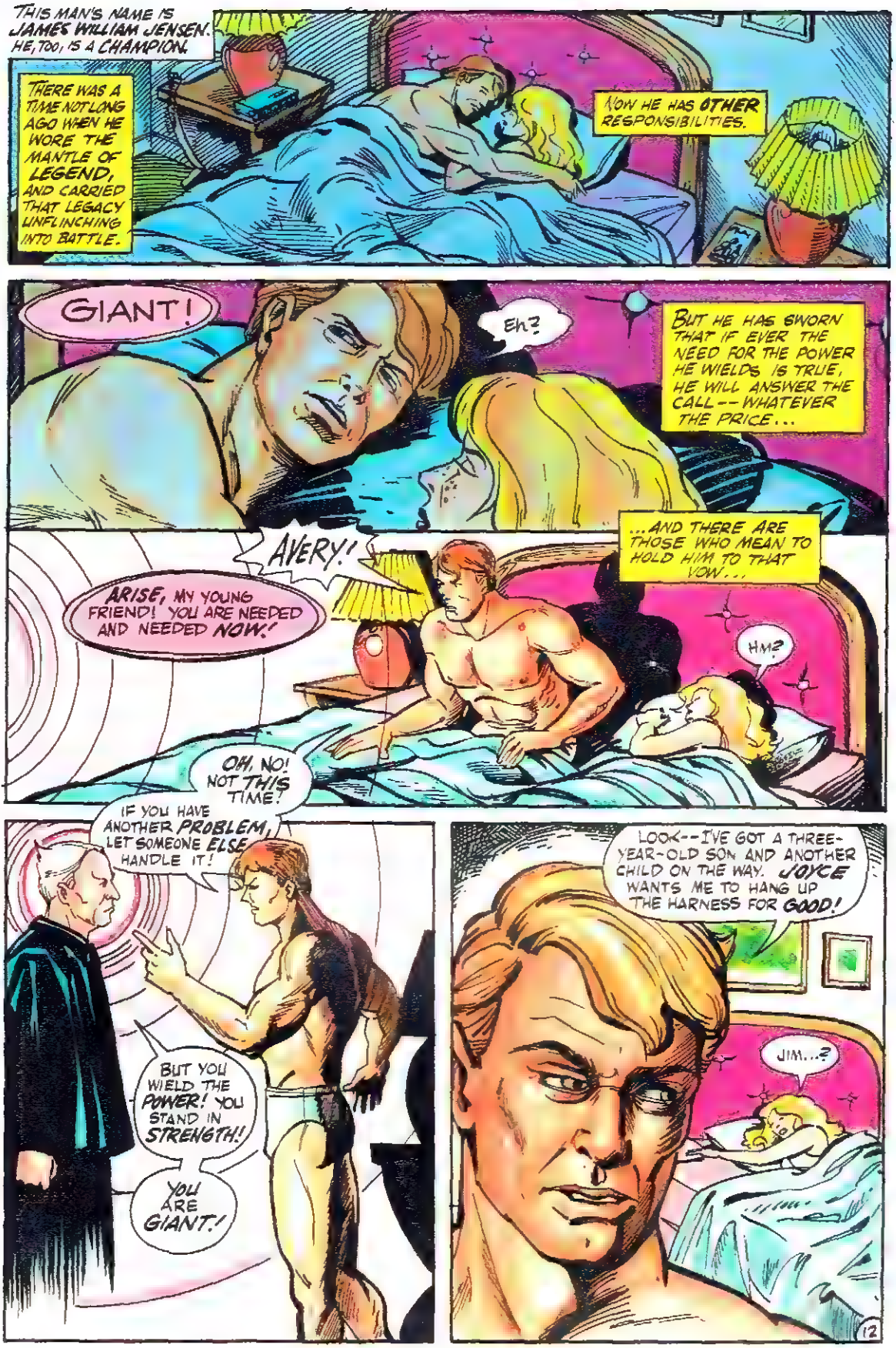

I'LL BE BACK! BET ON IT!
WE'LL BE WAITING!
ALLOW ME, DEAR.
THANK YOU, DOCTOR AVERY. I GUESS I BOTCHED IT.
WHAT A MESS!
NO, I WOULDN'T SAY THAT...
...AFTER ALL, WE STILL HAVE THE CROWN!
THIS IS THE HELLFIRE CROWN, ISN'T IT?
IT'S ELEGANT, BUT IT'S SO ...SIMPLE.
OH, NO! I RUINED ANOTHER COSTUME.
I THINK YOU DID GOOD, FLARE!
HUSH, DEAR!
SOMETIMES, ROSE, IT'S THE SIMPLE THINGS THAT ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS.
FOXBAT IS SIMPLE, YES?
CALL IN YOUR FRIENDS. IF DEMON IS INVOLVED IN THIS, WE'LL NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.
HENDERSON ELECTRONICS HAS BEEN A MAJOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR SINCE 1947. FOUNDED BY ROLAND R. HENDERSON, IT IS NOW RUN BY HIS SON, DONALD.
HENDERSON ELECTRONICS
TACTICALLY STRATEGIC ITEMS MOVE IN AND OUT OF THE HENDERSON WAREHOUSES, BUT NOT ALL OF THE CRATES ARE LABELED.
MOVE IT, MEN! WE DON'T GOT ALL NIGHT!
UNDER ROLAND HENDERSON'S ADMINISTRATION, THIS SORT OF MIDNIGHT SCENE WAS COMMONPLACE--PICK-UPS AND DELIVERIES WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION WHILE SECURITY GUARDS WERE STATIONED ELSEWHERE...
C'MON! THIS IS THE LAST CRATE!
MAN!-- IF THIS JOB DIDN'T PAY SO WELL...
WHEN DONALD HENDERSON TOOK OVER AFTER HIS FATHER'S DISAPPEARANCE SEVEN MONTHS AGO, THESE GOINGS-ON WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE STOPPED.
THEY HAVEN'T.

SOME PEOPLE ARE SLOW TO GET THE MESSAGE...
HEY, ERNIE, WHAT GIVES?
WE GOTTA GET GOIN'! THIS IS THE MARKSMAN'S TURF NOW!
WHAT IF HE SHOWS UP?
≥ULP! FRED! WH--
QUIT BELLYACHING AND GET BACK TO WORK! HE WON'T SHOW! YOU HEAR ME?
BESIDES, THERE'S FOUR OF US AND ONLY ONE OF HIM SO--
LOOK --UP THERE!!
I KNEW IT! I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN!
GIMME A BREAK...
WOW...
HUH? I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD, GENTLEMEN, HENDERSON ELECTRONICS NO LONGER WELCOMES THIS SORT OF ACTIVITY!
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THOSE WHO'VE NEVER HAD THE PLEASURE, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF--
--I'M YOUR HOST... THE MARKSMAN!
WHAT'D I TELL YA, FRED?

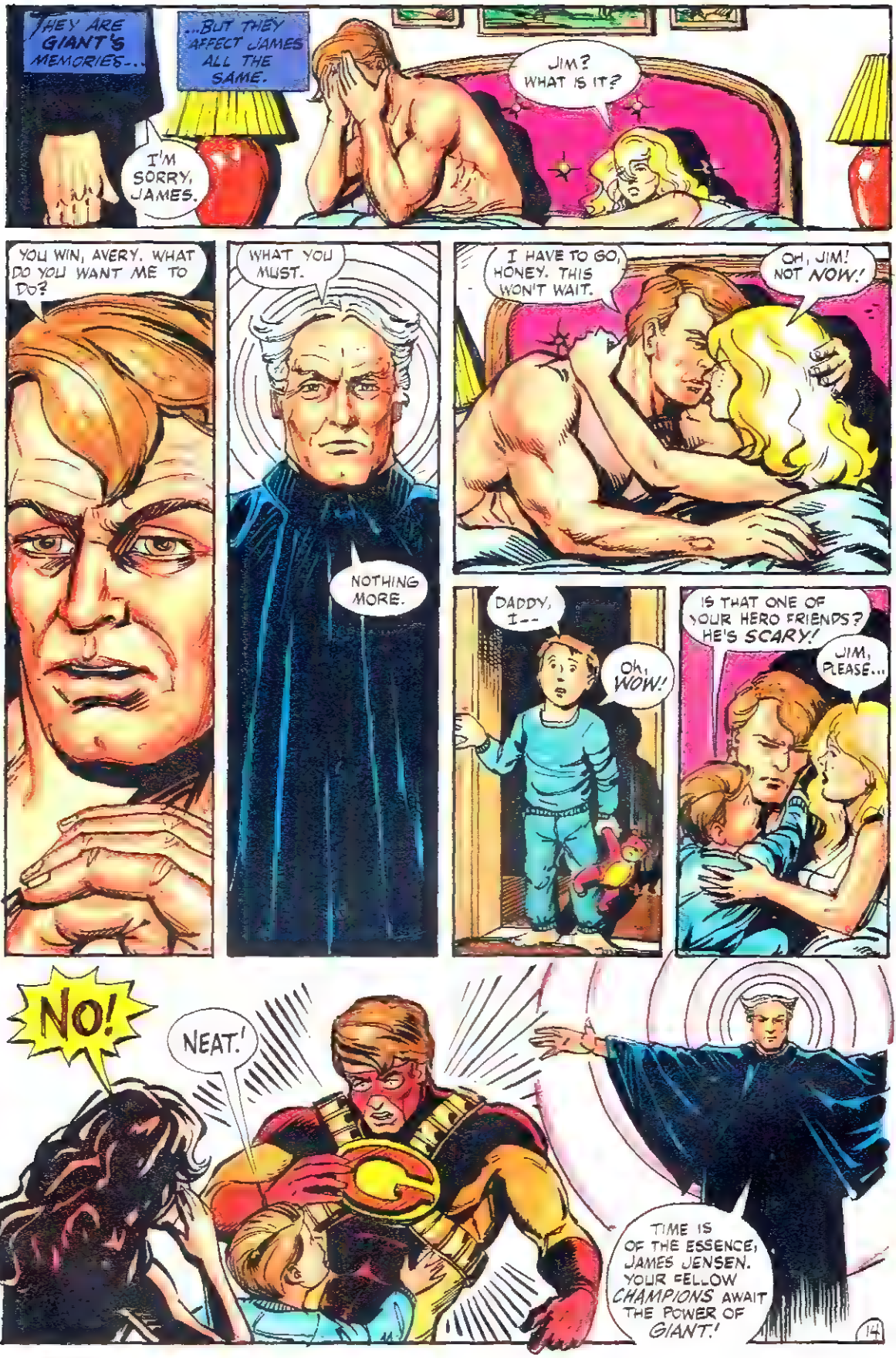
WHAT SAY WE DISPENSE WITH THE CHATTER AND GET DOWN TO BUSINESS?
NO! STAY BACK!!
STINKIN' SONICS!!
THAT'S ONE VOTE IN THE NEGATIVE. SHALL WE TRY FOR TWO?
DON'T TRY IT, ERNIE!
START THE ENGINE--I'M A-RUNNIN'!!
MAYBE IF I'M REAL QUIET...
YOUR BLASTER'S NOT GONNA HELP YOU AGAINST THIS, MARKSMAN!
UUMMPH!
FRED!-- C'MON! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
ACK!!
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH YOU, ERNIE?
YOU NEVER LEARN!

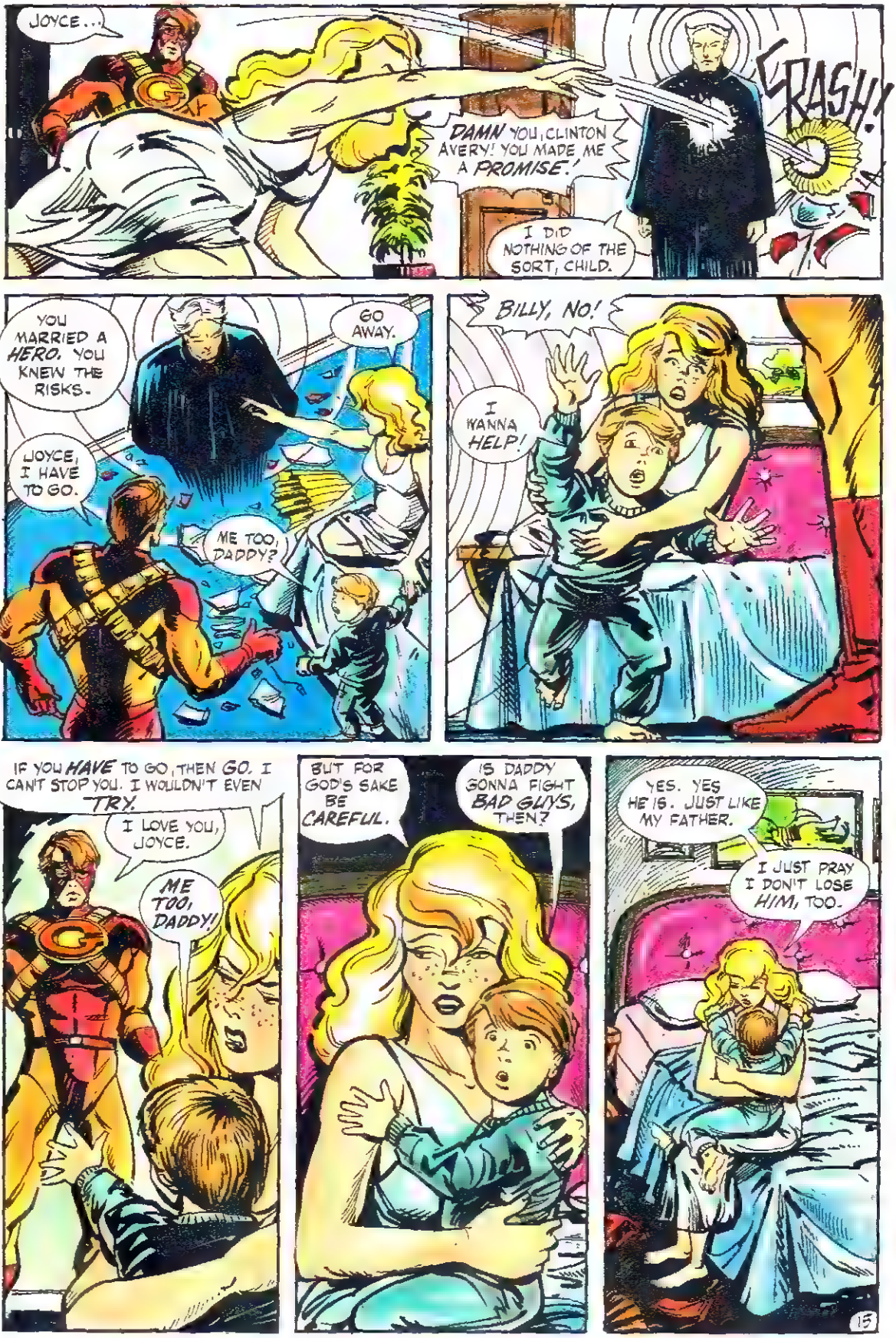

STEP ON IT! HE'S DRAWING A BEAD!
A TIGHT BEAM AT THE TIRES, I THINK...
...NO WAY I LET THESE CLOWNS ESCAPE!
VRRRRM!
MARKSMAN?
MARKSMAN... WE NEED YOUR HELP.
ROSE.
YOU SEEM UPSET. HAVE I COME AT A BAD TIME?
NO. IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M ALWAYS GLAD TO SEE YOU. YOU KNOW THAT. I'LL BE WITH YOU SHORTLY.
WHO YOU TALKIN' TO MARKSMAN?
'AN WHY'S IT SMELL LIKE FLOWERS?
NEVER MIND WHO I'M TALKING TO. I'M TALKING TO YOU! I WANT TO KNOW WHO YOU'RE WORKING FOR AND WHY!
I DON'T KNOW! FRED JUST SAID WE HAD A PICK-UP TO DO!
PICK-UP OF AN UNAUTHORIZED DELIVERY!
THESE AREN'T HENDERSON PRODUCTS, ERNIE!
I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR PAL, FRED, HAS GOTTEN YOU IN DEEP--
--WITH DEMON!

AGENT FRED CALLING DEMON BASE. DO YOU COPY?
WE'VE HAD A RUN-IN WITH MARKSMAN.
ONE PACKAGE LOST BUT NO SIGN OF PURSUIT. PLEASE ADVISE.
DEMON BASE HERE. WE COPY, AGENT FRED. WAIT FOR INSTRUCTIONS OVER.
AGENT... FRED?
A HIRELING, MASTER. HE REPORTS ONLY PARTIAL SUCCESS ON THE HENDERSON PROJECT.
MARKSMAN CUT IT SHORT. SHOULD WE TERMINATE THE OPERATION?
NO! LET THEM DELIVER WHAT THEY HAVE! IN THE END, SURPRISE MORE THAN ARMAMENTS WILL WIN US THE POWER OF THE HELLFIRE CROWN!
WE SHALL WEAVE A SPELL OF CONCEALMENT AND BEARD OUR ENEMIES IN THEIR LAIR! WE SHALL WREST THE PRIZE FROM THEIR COLD AND DYING HANDS!
AS FOR YOU, FOXBAT--YOU ARE AN INSUFFERABLE INCOMPETENT! ONLY YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE OTHER CHAMPIONS SAVES YOUR WORTHLESS HIDE!
OH?
THOSE GUYS ARE TOUGH, CURLYTOP!
I'LL LAY ODDS THEY HAND YOU YOUR HEADPIECE!
THIS AUDIENCE IS TERMINATED! CONSIDER YOURSELF FORTUNATE THAT YOU ARE NOT TERMINATED AS WELL!
PL-PP-PP!
BAH!


THIS MAN'S NAME IS JAMES WILLIAM JENSEN. HE, TOO, IS A CHAMPION.
THERE WAS A TIME NOT LONG AGO WHEN HE WORE THE MANTLE OF LEGEND, AND CARRIED THAT LEGACY UNFLINCHING INTO BATTLE.
NOW HE HAS OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES.
GIANT!
EH?
BUT HE HAS SWORN THAT IF EVER THE NEED FOR THE POWER HE WIELDS IS TRUE, HE WILL ANSWER THE CALL--WHATEVER THE PRICE...
AVERY!
ARISE, MY YOUNG FRIEND! YOU ARE NEEDED AND NEEDED NOW!
...AND THERE ARE THOSE WHO MEAN TO HOLD HIM TO THAT VOW...
HM?
OH, NO! NOT THIS TIME!
IF YOU HAVE ANOTHER PROBLEM, LET SOMEONE ELSE HANDLE IT!
BUT YOU WIELD THE POWER! YOU STAND IN STRENGTH!
YOU ARE GIANT!
LOOK--I'VE GOT A THREE-YEAR-OLD SON AND ANOTHER CHILD ON THE WAY. JOYCE WANTS ME TO HANG UP THE HARNESS FOR GOOD!
JIM...?
12

I'D LIKE TO HELP-- I WOULD!... BUT I CAN'T.
BUT, GIANT--
THERE'S A LOT OF TALENT IN THAT CHAMPIONS TEAM, DOC! THEY DON'T NEED ME!
I'M SORRY, BUT I JUST CAN'T HELP YOU THIS TIME!
PERHAPS A NAME WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND, JAMES.
WHAT NAME?
MALICE!!
MELISSA...
AND AT THE SOUND OF THE WORD... A NAME... IMAGES FLOOD HIS MIND.
THEY ARE NOT JAMES JENSEN'S MEMORIES...
...THEY ARE MEMORIES OF A TIME LONG PAST.


THEY ARE GIANT'S MEMORIES...
...BUT THEY AFFECT JAMES ALL THE SAME.
I'M SORRY, JAMES.
JIM? WHAT IS IT?
YOU WIN, AVERY. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?
WHAT YOU MUST.
NOTHING MORE.
I HAVE TO GO, HONEY. THIS WON'T WAIT.
OH, JIM! NOT NOW!
DADDY, I--
OH, WOW!
IS THAT ONE OF YOUR HERO FRIENDS? HE'S SCARY!
JIM, PLEASE...
NO!
NEAT!
TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, JAMES JENSEN. YOUR FELLOW CHAMPIONS AWAIT THE POWER OF GIANT!
14


JOYCE...
DAMN YOU, CLINTON AVERY! YOU MADE ME A PROMISE!
I DID NOTHING OF THE SORT, CHILD.
CRASH!
YOU MARRIED A HERO. YOU KNEW THE RISKS.
GO AWAY.
JOYCE, I HAVE TO GO.
ME TOO, DADDY?
BILLY, NO!
I WANNA HELP!
IF YOU HAVE TO GO, THEN GO. I CAN'T STOP YOU. I WOULDN'T EVEN TRY.
I LOVE YOU, JOYCE.
ME TOO, DADDY!
BUT FOR GOD'S SAKE BE CAREFUL.
IS DADDY GONNA FIGHT BAD GUYS, THEN?
YES. YES HE IS. JUST LIKE MY FATHER.
I JUST PRAY I DON'T LOSE HIM, TOO.
15

Chapter II
The POWER of DEMON
GOLDEN GATE PARK...
SOME MONTHS AGO, WITH THE PERMISSION OF A GRATEFUL CITY, HENDERSON ELECTRONICS BEGAN BUILDING A HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CHAMPIONS.
...SO THEN I TELL HER, 'OF COURSE I'M THAT ICESTAR..."
I'VE HEARD THAT STORY BEFORE, 'STAR. I'M MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU MAKE OF THESE WEAPONS.
A LARGE PIT WAS DUG, CONSTRUCTION WAS BEGUN AND THEN THE PIT WAS COVERED OVER AS IF NOTHING HAD EVER BEEN DONE.
VERY FEW PEOPLE KNOW PRECISELY WHAT WENT INTO THAT CONSTRUCTION...
...BUT MOST OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE COME TO THINK OF IT AS THEIR SECOND HOME.
GIANT!
H'LO, FLARE.

IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU! EVERYONE MISSES YOU TERRIBLY!
I MISS YOU, TOO.
HEY!
LOOK, FLARE, I KNOW YOU DON'T MEAN ANYTHING BY IT, BUT...
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK? I DESIGNED THIS ONE MYSELF!
IT'S NICE, BUT...
GIANT! GOOD TO HAVE YOU!
YEAH, WITH GARGOYLE GONE, WE'LL NEED YOUR STRENGTH!
GONE?
WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?
IMPORTANT THING IS, YOU'RE HERE!
WE'RE A TEAM AGAIN, BIG BUDDY! JUST LIKE IN THE OLD DAYS!
YES. WELL AND GOOD--
17

--BUT IF AN OLD MAN WHO IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE TEAM MAY SPEAK--
--THERE IS LITTLE TIME FOR PLEASANTRIES.
THE NEED FOR ACTION IS GREATER THAN MOST OF YOU REALIZE.
STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO COUNTER DEMON'S THREAT.
ROSE TOLD ME ON MY WAY HERE THAT THIS HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOUR CAREER AS DOCTOR ARCANE!
THANK YOU, MY DEAR.
IF SO, I'D APPRECIATE A BIT LESS MYSTERY AND A FEW MORE FACTS.
DOCTOR ARCANE?
YOU'RE DOCTOR ARCANE?!
A PRIVILEGE AND AN HONOR, SIR!
YOU WERE ALWAYS A ROLE MODEL FOR ME!
I WAS TELLING MY GIRLFRIEND, CYNTHIA, JUST THE OTHER DAY...
AND PRAISE BE THAT HE HAS A GIRLFRIEND.
OR YOU WOULDN'T BE SAFE. YES, I KNOW.
THAT'S ENOUGH, ICESTAR. DOCTOR AVERY TAPPED INTO MY POWERS TO BRING GIANT HERE, BUT IT WAS STILL A STRAIN.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, ROSE.
18

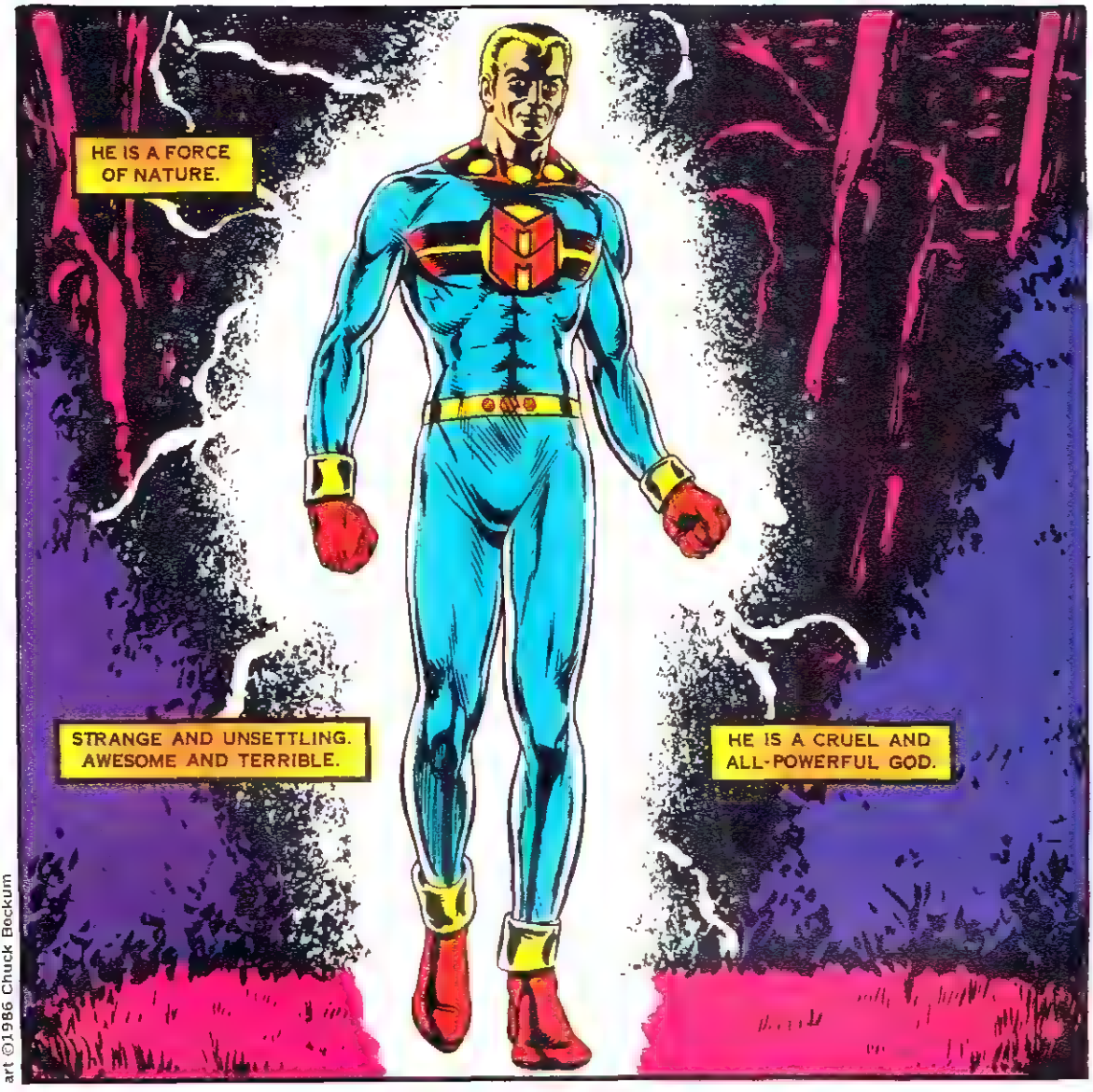
I CAN FORGIVE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF EXUBERANCE.
THE LAD'S HEART IS CLEARLY IN THE RIGHT PLACE.
HA! YOU HEAR THAT? HE LIKES ME!
OH, BROTHER!
PLEASE. ALL OF YOU.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, BUT I'M NOT HAPPY TO BE HERE. I THOUGHT I MADE IT CLEAR WHEN I RETIRED...
THAT YOU WOULD COME IF YOU WERE NEEDED.
EVIDENTLY, YOU ARE NEEDED.
IF I MAY, PERHAPS MISTER JENSEN WILL HEAR IT BETTER FROM ME.
IT HAS TO DO WITH THIS CROWN, JAMES...
...AND WITH THE THREE GEM FRAGMENTS--THE SOUL SHARDS--THAT FIT INTO THESE EMPTY SETTINGS.
DO YOU REMEMBER IT?
IT MUST BE DIFFICULT, I KNOW...
THE HELLFIRE CROWN...

DOCTOR ARCANE IS RIGHT! WE KNOW DEMON'S AFTER THIS STUPID CROWN!
LET'S GO GET 'EM!
ONLY A FOOL GOES OFF HALF-COCKED, ICESTAR!
LISTEN TO YOUR LEADER, YOUNG MAN. DEMON IS NO ORDINARY CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION TO BE HUNTED DOWN AND DESTROYED!
"IT MAY HAVE BEEN SO AT ITS BEGINNING IN EUROPE IN THE 1930'S. IT IS DEFINITELY NOT SO NOW.
"WE'VE ALL ENCOUNTERED DEMON IN THE PAST. BUT LIKE BLIND MEN FEELING ONLY PART OF AN ELEPHANT, YOU HAVE NEVER KNOWN THE FULL SCOPE OF THEIR OPERATIONS.
"YOU, ICESTAR, BATTLED MADAME SYNN, NEVER REALIZING THE WEAPONS SHE DEVELOPED ARE ULTIMATELY INTENDED FOR USE BY DEMON.
"YOU, ROSE, HAVE EXPOSED SEVERAL SCHEMES AND SAVED TRUSTING OLD WOMEN FROM INVESTING THEIR LIFE'S SAVINGS IN ONE OF DEMON'S MANY OCCULT FRAUDS.

YOU, MARKSMAN, HAVE BEEN THE MOST ACTIVE AGAINST DEMON, BY KEEPING THEM OUT OF THE SENATE AND EXPOSING THEM TO THE C.I.A!
YOU HAVE GIVEN THEM MORE REASON TO HATE YOU THAN ANY MAN STILL ALIVE.
AND YOU, FLARE, WERE CREATED BY DEMON!
NO!
YES! THE GENETIC EXPERIMENT THAT CREATED YOU AND YOUR SIBLINGS WAS SPONSORED BY DEMON.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU LEARNED ALL THIS, AVERY, AND I DON'T CARE!
COME TO THE POINT.
"THE POINT IS THAT DEMON IS VAST. YOU CANNOT JUST HUNT IT DOWN AND DESTROY IT.
"THEIR POWER IS POLITICAL, SCIENTIFIC, AND MYSTICAL.
"DEMON CAN BE RESISTED. DEMON CAN BE THWARTED. IT CAN BE WEAKENED, AND PERHAPS ONE DAY DESTROYED.
BUT THAT DAY HAS NOT YET COME.
DEMON...
I WAS NEVER TOLD...
21

YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO ADD TO THAT, GIANT?
YES, I DO.
I THINK DOCTOR AVERY OVERSTATES THE CASE, BUT HE'S ESSENTIALLY CORRECT.
EVEN IF EVIL CANNOT BE IMMEDIATELY DESTROYED, IT MUST BE FOUGHT.
I KNOW THAT.
IT IS THE STRUGGLE AGAINST EVIL IN THE FACE OF DESPAIR THAT DEFINES THE COURAGE OF THE HUMAN SOUL.
UNDERSTAND. I PREPARE YOU NOT FOR DEFEAT AT DEMON'S HANDS, BUT FOR VICTORY I...
ROSE? WHAT IS IT?
I'M NOT SURE. I FEEL... SOMETHING.
IF DEMON WANTS THIS CROWN, WE MUST KEEP IT FROM THEM. IF WE FAIL...
...WE RISK AWAKENING THE MOST DANGEROUS WOMAN EVER TO--
WHAT?!
GET DOWN!!
FZZAP
ZZAP!
22

NEXT: CONFLICT!



art ©1986 Chuck Beckum

BEYOND ANY HOPE OF MERCY.

MIRACLEMAN

BY ALAN MOORE AND CHUCK BECKUM

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The Comic Book Nook in Simi Valley, California, presents:

CHAMPIONS COMBAT ROOM #1

"Combat Room #1" ©1986 by Robert Pack and Dan Whitney

WELCOME . . .
to the first of six combat rooms designed by you, the readers of the *Champions* comic book. These rooms will allow you to compare your CHAMPIONS character with other characters from across the country. As of this writing, only the rooms for the first two issues of *Champions* have been chosen, so there's still time for you to send in your own design. Rules on *how* to enter the contest appear elsewhere.

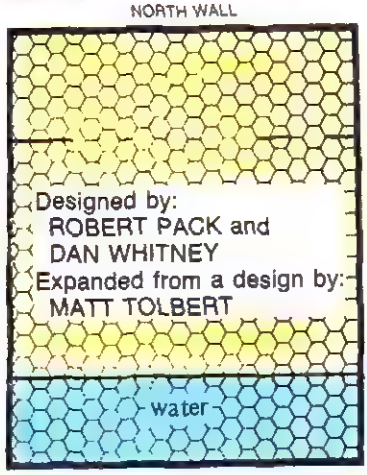
For the moment, just get your character, warm up your dice, and prepare yourself to face . . . the *CHAMPIONS CHALLENGE!*

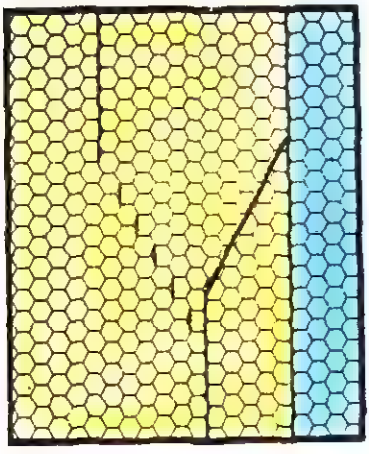
CHAMPIONS CHALLENGE RULES

All CHAMPIONS rules apply. The complete CHAMPIONS rules can be found in "Champions," "Champions II," and "Champions III," and in any other official supplements. If you don't have the rule books, you can probably find them at your local comics shop or gaming store.

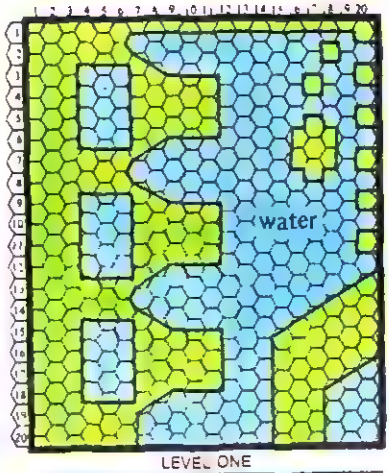
The challenge takes place in the 20x20x20-hex room shown on this page.

NORTH WALL

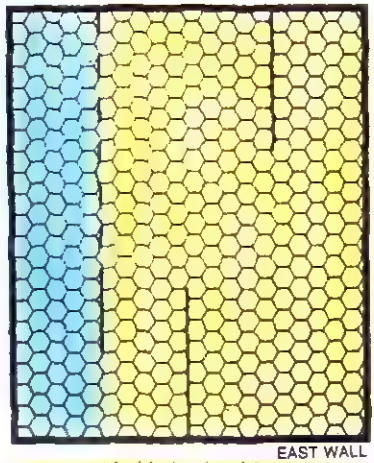




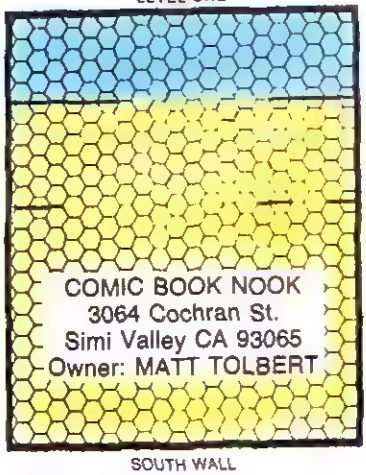
WEST WALL



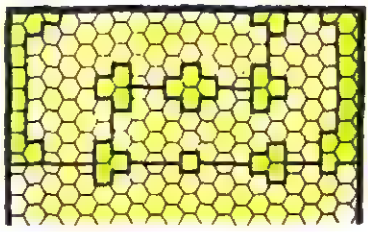
LEVEL ONE

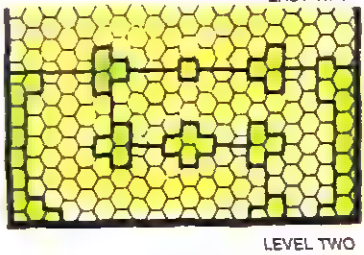


EAST WALL



SOUTH WALL





LEVEL TWO

Characters start 10 hexes apart. The character with the highest dexterity moves first, thereafter all movement is determined by the standard speed chart. The first character to reach negative STUN or BODY loses. There is, however, a time limit of 25 turns (5 game minutes), if nobody has lost, and time runs out, then the match is a draw.

Each phase, one random danger occurs. All characters get a perception roll to determine if they see the attack coming. If so, some characters may be able to dodge or use their defenses. *Unless* a character is able to dodge, an attack will automatically strike its target. To find out what happens, and where, *follow these directions:*

1) Check for coordinates by rolling D20's for height, width, and depth.

2) Check for type of danger by rolling a D20 and consulting the list below. All attacks are 8" area effect, radius. Attacks marked with an asterisk (*) are not stopped by walls or platforms.

1) 1D6 Physical Killing Attack
2) 1D6 Energy Killing Attack
3) *3D6 NND cold (vs 30 pts Life Support)
4) *3D6 NND sonics, affects desolid, (vs ear coverings or deafness)
5) *3D6 NND gas (vs 10 pts Life Support)
6) *3D6 Flash, affects desolidified
7) *Darkness, all senses but sonar (lasts 3 segments)
8) 3D6 Entangle
9) 8D6 Physical Blast
10) *4D6 Ego Attack, affects desolidified
11) 2D6 Constitution Drain
12) 8D6 increased knockback, KB only
13) 8D6 Energy (heat) Blast
14) 8D6 Energy (magnetics) Blast
15) 8D6 Energy (radiation) Blast
16) 8D6 Energy (electricity) Blast
17) 8D6 Energy (cosmic energy) Blast
18) 8D6 Energy (magic) Blast
19) 8D6 Energy (light) Blast
20) *9D6 Mental Illusion (the other player defines where, how, etc., within reason)

3) Then roll 1D6 for the point of origin of the attack, to determine surprise.

1) Ceiling
2) North Wall
3) East Wall
4) South Wall
5) West Wall
6) Floor

All bars, supports, platforms, and the stairway are made of "tonyum steel" with a DEF of 10 and BODY of 5.

A DEX roll at minus 2 is required to keep from falling off the bars at the upper levels.

The platforms on the west wall between the second and third level are square, one "hex width" per side. A typical superhero cannot jump from platform to platform because there is no room for a running start. The stairs on the same wall are also one "hex width" wide.

Good luck, and may the best super-hero win!

GUIDELINES FOR THE *CHAMPIONS COMBAT ROOM* COMPETITION

1) General rules for construction of the Combat Room:

Combat rooms should follow the rules and specifications set out in the CHAMPIONS supplement, CHAMPIONS III, under the section heading "Danger Rooms" in regard to your room's basic ratings, the offensive and defensive ratings of weapons, robots, traps, and walls, and the sequence of play.

The basic ratings of your room are your choice, except for the Damage Class. We will be running rooms of various levels of difficulty to allow for characters of different power levels. Design your room to match the levels of the characters you play with. The Damage Class for all rooms will be "Normal." This allows for exciting play, but also leaves victory or *defeat to the characters and not to a surprise device.*

The building of the room and machinery need not follow the random generators, but each item should fall within the parameters listed in the rules.

Your room should contain a "panic button" which will turn the combat room off should either of the players press it.

The objective of the combat room is to defeat your opponent. Any further objectives are optional, but they can add a lot of flavor to your room.

Characters should enter the room freely and place themselves where they wish to start the contest, unless your room design already contains fair starting places for each character.

Combat follows the CHAMPIONS rules as set out in the rule book and all official supplements.

Victory comes from defeating your opponent. Defeating does not necessarily mean killing him. Rendering a character unconscious, rendering him helpless, causing him to surrender, are all victories for your character. Any character who *presses the "panic button" forfeits victory* to his opponent.

The owner and manager or your retail comics or gaming store is the final arbiter as to whether or not the room was created fairly and the combat judged fairly.

2) Judging rooms for playability and atmosphere:

Since we will probably be getting many more submissions than the few we can print in this mini-series, we'll be selecting the rooms on the basis of "playability," and also on the basis of "atmosphere."

"Playability" means that the room should be structured in a way that will appeal to the resident gamers at the Eclipse offices. Simplicity is an important factor to keep in mind. Notice that this *issue's combat room required only one* simple chart to make it playable.

"Atmosphere" means that the room will have a unique feel to it, rather than being a simple layout of traps and obstacles. "Atmosphere" gives your room a theatrical or genre setting that helps to distinguish *it from other combat rooms. For instance,* a "high tech" room carries a different emotional context than a "spooky castle" room, an "alien spaceship" room, or a "mad scientist's laboratory" room. Designing your room to reflect a genre stereotype will help us distinguish the rooms from each other when they go into print.

3) How to submit your room and winning character:

All entries must be submitted through a retail comics or gaming store by the manager or owner.

All combat rooms must be completely noted as to the characteristics of the room itself, and each weapon, robot, trap, or wall. A diagram of the room must accompany the text, displaying all weapons, *robots, traps, and walls, whether or not* they're in plain sight.

Determination of your store's winning character should be made by playing characters against each other in a round-robin tournament, as agreed upon by the store owner or the organizer of the store's gaming group.

The winning character who accompanies the room must have all characteristics noted, and a character drawing that our artist can use as a guideline.

All entries must be typed.

Be sure to include the names and addresses of the room designer, the creator of the winning character, the store submitting the combat room, and the name of the manager or owner of the store. The name of the gaming club and of participating gamers can be included, too, and we'll try to include as much of this information as we can on these printed pages.

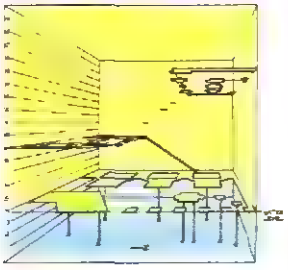
Copyrights for any characters and rooms used in this comic will be retained by the creators, and notice to that effect will be printed. Issue #2's contest room *will spotlight the winner of the competition* at Lyn Pederson's "Page After Page" in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The entries to see print in issues #3-6 will be chosen from what is in Eclipse's hands on the following dates: Issue #3—May 30; Issue #4—June 10; Issue #5—July 1; Issue #6—August 1. All entries will remain eligible through the entire run of this mini-series, so the earlier your entry is in our hands, the better your chances of seeing it in print!

AND THE WINNER OF THIS ISSUE'S COMBAT ROOM COMPETITION IS:

RAZE *created by and* ©1986 by Peter Batterton

VAL	CHAR	Cost	Cost	Powers	END	100	+ Disadvantages
10	STR	0	50	4D6 Ranged Killing Attack, O F, Penetrating, [16 charges]		30	Hunted by evil scientific organization ≤8
33	DEX	46	20	10 levels w/RKA, OIF		30	Hunted by high-tech law-enforcement agency ≤8
23	CON	17	13	Active Sonar, OIF		15	Hunted by Genocide ≤8
10	BODY	0	13	½ PD Reduction, OIF		15	Hunted by VIPER ≤8
10	INT	0	13	½ ED Reduction, OIF		15	Secret ID (Melissa Gilroy)
10	EGO	0		note that all of Raze's extra stats		15	Irrational fear of death
10	PRE	0		and are focused in her armor		2	Experience Spent
10	COM	5					
23	PD	14					
23	ED	12					
6	SPD	11					
10	REC	4					
46	END	0					
40	STUN	9					
CHAR Cost		109 + 113	Power Cost	=	Total Cost	222	= Disadvantage Total



Champions Combat Room no. 1 in perspective.

HONORS ALSO GO TO:

FORCEMASTER by James Fisher
DEATH THREAT by Mike Fennell
STARBLAST by Jason Welch
REFUGEE by Jay Linse

For your CHAMPIONS campaign . . .

FLARE!

inspired by the character created by Stacy Laurence

Real Name: Teresa ("Terri") Feran
Place of birth: Somewhere in the Amazon rain forests of South America
Marital status: Single
Known relatives: Two brothers, one sister (whereabouts unknown); father unknown, mother reportedly deceased
Height: 5'6"
Weight: 130 lbs.
Age: Classified
Eyes: Bright blue
Hair: Shimmering blonde

VAL	CHAR	Cost	Cost		Powers	END
25	STR	15	55		Multi-Power—55-pt pool	
23	DEX	39	4	u	9D6 Light Energy Blast	9
23	CON	26	4	u	4½D6 Flash	9
10	BODY	0	4	u	3D6 Individual Flash + 2D6 Attack vs Limited (Flash) Defense	9
15	INT	5				
13	EGO	6	10	m	25" Flight	5
20	PRE	10	5		+10 ED vs Light-based Attacks	
20	COM	5	15		50% Damage Resistance	
15	PD	10	7		10 pts Ego Defense	
20	ED	15	5		5 pts Flash Defense	
5	SPD	17	10		UV Vision	
10	REC	0	10		2D6 Luck	
80	END	17	4		Speaks perfect German w/literacy	
40	STUN	5				

100	+ Disadvantages
5	1D6 Unluck
5	1D6 Stun vs Anti-Photonic Energy
30	x2 Stun vs Edged Weapons
20	Code vs Killing
15	Likes getting attention
8	Has a crush on Giant
5	Afraid of knives
3	Sensitive about her age
3	Obsessed with finding a cure for rapid aging
5	Ages at twice normal rate
30	Hunted ≤11 by DEMON
25	Hunted ≤11 by Poinsettia
13	Hunted ≤8 by VIPER
15	Secret Identity
21	Experience Spent

CHAR Cost 170 + 133 Power Cost = Total Cost 303 = Disadvantage Total

Physical attributes: Flare is a highly developed physical specimen. She and her three siblings were created to meet the ideal of a sound mind in a sound body, and she comes very close to achieving that goal. She's capable of lifting upwards of 800 kilograms without evident strain, and she has withstood massive impacts that should have killed her.
Powers: Flare also has the power to absorb and utilize photonic energy. Microscopic photoactive organelles imbedded in her skin enable her to absorb light, then release it either as destructive force or as a powerful flash of brightness. Through the *controlled* release of her energy, Flare is also capable of defying gravity. Her eyes are so keen that she can see in darkness as easily as she can in daylight.
Weaknesses: Flare's power makes her sensitive to certain forms of "anti-photonic" energy. Further, if her skin is cut, a *spontaneous* release of photonic energy will invariably occur, causing her to take more damage than one might otherwise expect from such a blow.
Origin: The Flare who appears in the CHAMPIONS comic book is one of four living products of a genetic experiment sponsored by DEMON and conducted by a group of expatriate Nazi scientists. The purpose of the experiment was to create an elite group of agents who would be capable of defeating DEMON's various super-powered enemies. But with Flare, the experiment went wrong. Instead of destroying DEMON's enemies when she was sent against them, she *joined* them, and has since become a full-fledged member of the Champions.
Background: At the time this mini-series begins, Flare has not been a Champion very long. She's the "new kid in the classroom," and she wants very much to prove herself to the others. With the help of her friend, the Marksman, she has established a civilian identity for herself as "Terri Feran," a clerk at the San Francisco Public Library.
Game Mechanics: For those GameMasters out there who might be interested in running this version of Flare as a character in your CHAMPIONS campaign, there are a few things about her that require special explanation:

1) Note that she *may not* use more than 5" of Flight at the same time she uses one of the other abilities in her Multipower. She'll usually be *hovering* if she happens to be in the air when she attacks.

2) To apply the damage from the *third* slot in Flare's Multipower, first apply the target's Flash Defense (if any) against the Flash effect, *then* apply any remaining Flash Defense against the damage done by the Energy Blast. This "Dazzle Burst" goes directly into a victim's nervous system, through the optic nerve, bypassing normal energy defenses.

3) And note that while a side effect of the genetic process that was used to create Flare causes her to age more rapidly than a normal person, this will probably have little direct effect on the play of the character *unless* your campaign lasts a *long* time. Use the relevant disadvantages, rather, as a springboard for scenarios in which Flare either seeks out or is *presented* with a possible cure.

FLARE [a.k.a Terri Feran] Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12

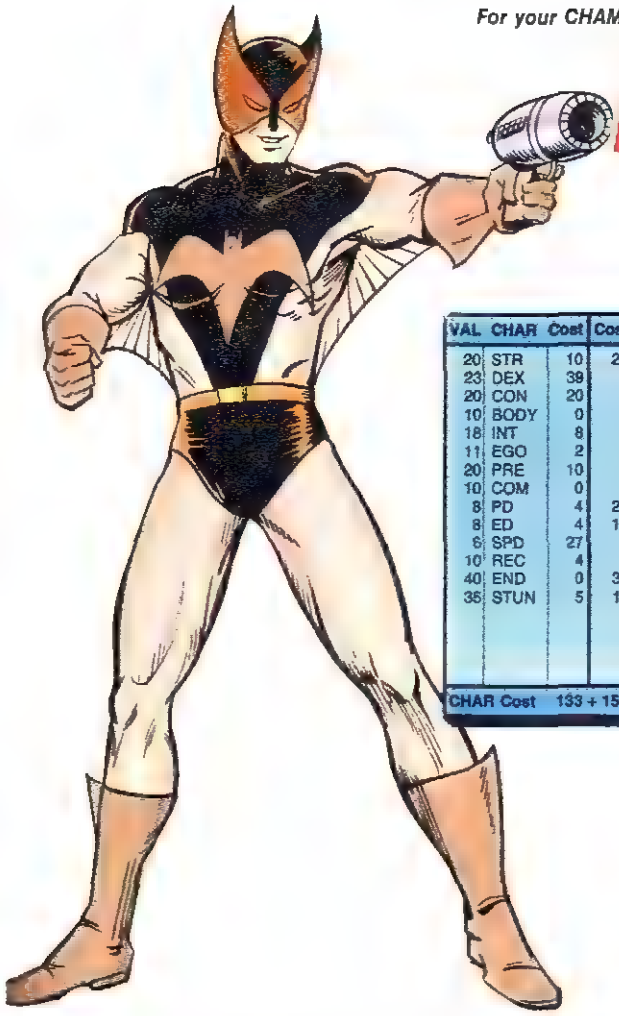
OCV:	8	PD:	15	PER Roll:	12	Running:	6"
DCV:	8	rPD:	8	DEX Roll:	14	Flight:	25"
ECV:	4	ED:	20	INT Roll:	12	Swimming:	2"
		rED:	10	EGO Roll:	12		
		Ego Def:	10	Note that Flare has 10 points of extra PD (including 5 extra resistant PD) vs Light-based attacks			
		Flash Def	5				

END: 80 STUN: 40 BODY: 10

For your CHAMPIONS campaign . . .

FOXBAT

based on the character created by Bruce Harlick



VAL	CHAR	Cost	Cost		Powers	END
20	STR	10	25		Multi-Power—50-pt pool, OAF	
23	DEX	39	2	u	10D6 Physical Blast [8 charges]	
20	CON	20	2	u	5D6 Entangle [8 charges]	
10	BODY	0	2	u	3D6+1 RKA, physical [8]	
18	INT	8	2	u	3D6+1 Area Effect, NND (vs 10 pts Life Support) Gas Attack [8]	
11	EGO	2				
20	PRE	10	2	u	Darkness, 3"r., vs IR, UV, X-Ray, Radar [8 charges]	
10	COM	0				
8	PD	4	20		Martial Arts	
8	ED	4	18		Armor (8,8), OIF	
6	SPD	27	7		10 pts Flash Defense, OIF	
10	REC	4	8		20" Gliding, OAF	
40	END	0	36		30-pt Gadget Pool	
35	STUN	5	10		Acrobatics ≤14	
			5		Disguise ≤13	
			5		Stealth ≤14	
			5		Computer Programming ≤13	
			5		Security Systems ≤13	

CHAR Cost	133 + 154	Power Cost	=	Total Cost	287	=	Disadvantage Total

100	+ Disadvantages
10	2D6 Unluck
20	x2 Stun vs Fire
30	x2 Stun vs Killing Attacks
20	Code vs Killing
20	Thinks he's a comic book character
8	Likes getting attention
8	Thinks all women should idolize him
15	Enraged ≤11, Recovers ≤11 if insulted
30	Hunted ≤11 by the Champions
26	Villain Bonus

Real Name: Frederick ("Freddy") Fosgood
Place of birth: San Francisco, CA
Marital status: Single
Known relatives: None
Known companions: Exo-Skeleton Man
Height: 5'8"
Weight: 175 lbs.
Age: 30
Eyes: Brown
Hair: Brown

Origin: Freddy Fosgood used to be a very prominent member of the San Francisco social scene. He was always considered a little bit crazy, but he had so much money that his eccentricities were largely ignored. People *liked* Freddy, and Freddy liked *them.*

Then Freddy made the mistake of inviting the local superhero, Icestar, to the grand opening of his "Billion-Dollar Pleasure Palace"—a glorious showplace built on a prominent peak overlooking the Pacific Ocean. While Icestar was there, the evil Madame Synn took advantage of the opportunity and tested a new design for an invulnerable battle-tank against her frosty foe. During the battle, Freddy's new mansion was completely obliterated!

When the insurance company refused to pay off, saying that his policy didn't cover *unnatural* disasters, Freddy Fosgood was wiped out! Ruined! And, he concluded, it was *all Icestar's fault!* Freddy vowed to take vengeance on Icestar! He had long considered the possibility of becoming a costumed hero himself, but now he would turn his talents in a *different* direction, and attempt to regain his fortune by working *outside* the law. He took the code-name *FOXBAT* and, with the *assistance* of Madame Synn, he cobbled together a costume, a "Foxbatmobile," and the first version of his soon-to-be-dreaded "Popgun."

No one has ever considered Foxbat a serious *threat* to Icestar or the other Champions, but he has continued to make a nuisance of himself. He has studied his enemies, and probably knows more about the Champions than anyone else who has ever fought them.

Weapons: Foxbat always has his Popgun and his protective costume with him when he goes into action, but he'll often supplement this basic gear with additional gadgetry. He has been known to use radar sensors, telescopic sights, gas masks, sensory amplifying earplugs, and any number of other items.

Only Madame Synn and Foxbat know *exactly* how the Popgun works, but evidence seems to indicate that some sort of miniaturized matter compressor is housed at the base of the barrel. When Foxbat applies precise pressure to the handle of the gun, one of several different effects can be achieved. The Popgun can fire round projectiles, gloop, needles, gas, and smoke; these effects are always accompanied by a loud *pop!*

Gaming Notes: When you use Foxbat in your campaign, always remember that he *doesn't take things seriously!* He's a lecherous little lunatic who blames other people for his misfortunes and accepts no responsibility for anything he does. He's likable enough, in a bizarre sort of way, but he *can* be dangerous if he isn't dealt with immediately.

FOXBAT [a.k.a. Freddy Fosgood] — Phases: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12

OCV:	8	PD:	16	PER Roll:	13	Running:	6"
DCV:	8	rPD:	8	DEX Roll:	14	Gliding:	20"
ECV:	4	ED:	16	INT Roll	12	Swimming:	2"
		rED:	8	EGO Roll:	11		
		Flash Def: 10		Note that Foxbat has Martial Arts and Acrobatics to assist him in hand-to-hand combat			

END: 40 | STUN: 35 | BODY: 10

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CHAMPIONS COMMENTS

Just so you'll know: We briefly considered letting *Foxbat* handle the *Champions Comments* in this first issue, and we may give him a crack at it *next* issue. In the meantime, though, here's an informative letter for those of you who aren't familiar with the *CHAMPIONS roleplaying game from* **Steve Peterson,** the President of Hero Games.

* * * *

WELCOME TO THE FIRST issue of the *Champions* comic book! It's a great pleasure for all of us associated with Hero Games to see the characters we created for our roleplaying game assume new identities and new personas as full-fledged comic book characters. Finally, the Champions universe comes alive in a four-color format! It's a great *thrill!*

Perhaps I'd better back up a few steps for those of you who aren't roleplayers and don't have the slightest idea what *I'm talking about. In a nutshell, the* Champions comic book is derived from the bestselling roleplaying game, *CHAMPIONS,* that George Mac Donald and I wrote and published back in 1981. We formed a company (Hero Games) to market CHAMPIONS, and CHAMPIONS has since become one of the bestselling roleplaying games ever.

What is a roleplaying game? It's a type of game where the players take on the roles of characters and play in stories that one of the players (who's called the Game Master) creates. *Roleplaying games are set in a variety of* backgrounds: fantasy, science fiction, pulp novels, spy thrillers, or even superheroes (as in CHAMPIONS). The first successful roleplaying game was Dungeons & Dragons, back in 1974. Since then, hundreds of roleplaying games have been created, CHAMPIONS prominent among them.

George created the first playtest version of CHAMPIONS in 1978. While the rules were crude, George's vision of the Champions universe was exciting and richly detailed. The *very first characters in George's universe were* Icestar (created by Glenn Thain) and Speed (created by Vernon Turner). *In a very simple* scenario, they encountered some bank robbers in downtown New York. Such fun was had that George was persuaded to run another adventure with a full cast of players, including yours truly. A wild free-for-all on the streets of New York ensued. I recall Speed using a new Thunderbird to beat Mechanon to a pile of junk metal, Anaconda agents running through the streets, and a massive traffic jam. Soon, Glenn had *started a campaign of his own,* based in Chicago. After some discussion, George and Glenn *agreed to run a* "joint" universe; that is, Chicago and New York were part of the same world (not Earth-M and Earth-T, to paraphrase a famous comic book background).

The first superheroes we played were all independents who just happened to associate for our adventures; the only real super-*team* was the Legion of Honor, composed entirely of non-player characters who were much more powerful than any of the *player* characters. *The first super-group formed* by player characters was called *The Guardians,* and was *based in New York; the founder* was the Hunter (played by me), and his first recruits were the Marksman (played by Bruce Harlick), Flare (played by Stacy Laurence), and the Hornet (played by Glenn Thain). This group still exists, though it has changed considerably over the years. The Hunter has been missing (and presumed dead) for four years now, and the Hornet has retired in order to pursue an acting career. *The Marksman and Flare are still with the group,* and have been joined by Icestar, Rose (played by Tom *Tumey*), *Dove* (played by Ray Greer), and Goliath (played by me, and known as "Giant" in the comic book).

When Hero Games started to produce supplements for CHAMPIONS, we drew heavily on the characters and situations created by George and Glenn in the early campaign days. References to many of our characters are found in the rule books, *Champions, Champions II,* and *Champions III.* Some of the villains our characters faced appear in *Enemies* and *Enemies II.* But the *full* story of the original Hero *Campaign has never* been told.

The Champions comic book *brings* you some of our favorite characters from the Hero Campaign. But because roleplaying adventures don't necessary make for good comic book stories, some changes and modifications have been made. There were other considerations, too: Some of you who are already acquainted with the Guardians may, for example, be disappointed that Gargoyle, *a character created* by Mark Williams (whose artwork appears prominently in the *early editions of the rule books),* is *mentioned* only briefly, and seen not at all; this was because Mark has plans of his own for the character, and specifically *asked* that he not be used. The locale of the team has been moved from New York to San Francisco as a tribute to the Bay Area home of Hero Games, and, for the time being at least, the team will be referred to as "Champions" instead of "Guardians" in the interest of not confusing comic *book readers who aren't* familiar with the game. If any of this troubles you, you can *assume that the comic book adventures* follow our heroes in the *early* days of their careers, before they became the world-famous group they are today.

One more item of note: later this year, a CHAMPIONS supplement will be published that does reveal much of the background information regarding the Guardians and the Hero Campaign. We'll be giving you the current, more powerful versions of the characters, plus the characters as they appear in the comic book, and important material regarding *the Guardians' headquarters and resources.*

We hope you enjoy the Champions universe as much as we have. If you do, please write to Eclipse Comics and tell them so. Right now, *Champions* is only scheduled as a six-issue limited series, but the early sales figures are encouraging, and if enough of you enjoy these adventures and actually buy the comics, it may be that the series will continue in some form or another as a regular monthly book!

But rest assured that these Champions, the Guardians, *will continue their fight against evil whether or not their* exploits continue to be chronicled in the Champions comic *book. Until* next issue, then, remember to *Be a Hero!*

—Steve Peterson

* * * *

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